

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

Meeting 9:00 A.M.
Thurston County Public Works
9605 Tilley Rd S, Suite C
Olympia, WA 98512

December 17, 2015 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Lonnie Willey, Town of Pe Ell; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Julie Balmelli-Powe, City of Chehalis; Edna Fund, Lewis County Commissioner; Frank Chestnut, City of Cosmopolis; Alan Vanell, Town of Bucoda; Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Rick Sangder, City of Aberdeen; Sherri Nehl, Thurston County; Ron Averill, City of Centralia.

Board Members Excused: Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine.

Others Present: Please see sign in sheet.

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda.
- Meeting Notes from September 17, 2015.
- Early Habitat Project Solicitation.
- French Contract Amendment.
- SEPA/EIS Schedule.
- Financial Report.
- See https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1492/34798/meetings.aspx#Dec2015.

1. Call to Order

Chair Raines called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

2. Introductions

Self-introductions were made by all attending. Chair Raines acknowledged Mr. Estes and thanked him for his contribution to the Flood Authority over the last four years. He has been a great mayor and has accomplished many projects in Montesano. Chair Raines presented him with a certificate of appreciation.

Chair Raines also thanked Mr. Pinn, City of Napavine, who was absent. He has retired and will no longer be on the Flood Authority board. Chair Raines had a certificate for him as well.

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda; it was approved as presented.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes from September 17, 2015

There were no corrections to the meeting notes; they were approved as presented.

5. Update on Local Capital Construction Projects

Mr. Boettcher shared a checklist he prepared so new projects would get launched appropriately under the new RCO contract management approach being implemented. He went to the link to show how it works. There are about 10 projects that are at about 85% set-up and ready to begin. Yellow projects

have scope changes. The Lewis County project is private and doesn't appear to be able to be funded directly through RCO so options with Lewis County Public Works are being explored. All green projects are up and running.

The initial Northside Levee Project in Aberdeen was designed and submitted to FEMA for their review. Mr. Sangder (Aberdeen Public Works) attended the meeting and stated there were some problems with the initial levee as proposed. For example, under the initial design some city residents would be protected (inside of the levee) and some city residents would not be protected (outside of the levee). As a result, an expanded levee plan is being explored for the new 15-17 funding. The expanded Northside levee would protect all city residents and extend into Hoquiam too. The city will pursue the expanded levee concept in earnest once the new mayor and city council members assume their respective positions and a larger master planning process initiated by cities of Hoquiam and Aberdeen and funded by Grays Harbor County gets underway. The larger master planning process should take about 8 months, starting in September. Chair Raines stated the cost of the build out of the larger master planning process could be as much as \$60 to 80 million. She hoped that some would be through federal funding with a match for the cities. This cost will include community and economic revitalization. There was substantial discussion and Kris Koski, engineer for the project, described the project and pointed out on the map the different sections of the levee and what it would accomplish.

Regarding the Wishkah Rd project, Chair Raines stated it is moving forward with the inclusion of additional segments and potentially new options. WSDOT purchasing some of the land is being explored for example as an option. The Ellison Dip area and Long Swamp are being considered to add to the project. It is turning out to be a much larger project than originally scoped but Senator Hargrove does not have a problem asking for more money. Mr. Boettcher stated there is currently \$4.78M for this project; that may change.

6. Update on Gage Alerts/Flood Warning System

Mr. Boettcher stated 118 people have signed up which is quite a large increase from last year. A lot of people are accessing with smart phones so that needs to be kept in mind. Generally everyone likes receiving notification; there have been very few negative comments.

Dave Curtis reported on updates to the Flood Warning System website. The internal design recognizes the device that a person is using and can match that device. He recapped the survey that went out and stated that feedback was very positive. The inundation mapping has been very popular and it has been expanded.

Mr. Curtis recapped the last five years and stated he has talked to other agencies about the Chehalis flood warning system. There are many who want the same system. He stated it is important to keep up the outreach.

7. Update: Replacement of Damaged WF Satsop River Gage

Mr. Curtis reported a failure on a gage at Satsop. It is not reporting the flood elevation. A repair would cost about \$8K or \$10K for a new bridge mount radar. Green Diamond owns the bridge and permission would be required to get onto the bridge. Mr. Boettcher asked if the money should come out of the small projects funding. There were thumbs up all around.

8. Update on Local Flood Proofing Activities

This topic was discussed under agenda item 11.

9. Update on Early Action Habitat Project Solicitation

Mr. Kramer reported that an RFP for funding habitat projects went out in November with a deadline for submitting proposals of January 8, 2016. Applicants will be notified in February and contracts will go through RCO. The funding review and allocation process is similar to what was done for salmon recovery projects. No match is required.

10. Update on Status of Chehalis Basin Strategy Budget

The Legislature has appropriated \$50 million with \$25 million to go towards local flood projects and habitat work. Bob Amrine recommended a pilot project for people living on the Chehalis River. Other money will go towards generating an agreement with the conservation districts and WDFW studies on the species in the basin and the benefits of restoration in the Basin. DNR has money for supporting the Flood Authority.

11. Amendment to Contract for French and Associates

Mr. Kramer stated \$115,000 needs to be added to French and Associates contract for them to continue their work and extend their contract to 2017. Their work would include retrofitting projects, the work in Bucoda, a pilot project in Centralia, additional work on the repetitive loss, continuing work with local jurisdictions regarding increasing damages at flood level. Lewis County will need to amend its contract with RCO.

There was discussion regarding the pilot project in Centralia and its UGA. Mr. Louthain stated the meeting will only include Centralia but it could be expanded. Mr. Kramer stated the current budget does not include the UGA. **The contract for French and Associates was amended to include the UGA.** He asked if the project in Centralia would include elevating homes or buyouts and how would this occur. Mr. Louthain stated they are looking at repetitive loss areas to find a concentration of these areas. French and Associates could be asked what the cost would be to expand that scope.

Mr. Kramer asked if there was support for this effort. There was consensus.

12. Update on Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The governor will make a decision on the EIS early in 2017. In the meantime, the Flood Authority members will receive reports on what is being considered. The Work Group's recommendation included money for private flood-proofing and restoration in the Basin. Both would happen on private property which means there has to be an interest from the property owner. So far there is no sense of interest from property owners. Focus groups in February will be used to get a sense from land owners and the initial reaction to these projects and what incentives they might consider. At the January meeting there will be questions for the focus groups. The Flood Authority will be working with the conservation districts who are already out there talking to land owners.

13. Update on State Audit

Ms. Napier reported that the State Auditor was at Lewis County Community Development on December 7, staying about a week. The Flood Authority should expect an accountability audit every three years. The auditor asked questions about accountability and transparency. There is \$3,550 in the budget for general services; however that was not a cost that was expected. Another budget amendment is needed to cover that cost.

Regarding accountability, Ms. Napier stated the entrance audit was for 2012-2014 (State fiscal years). The auditor looked at the Flood Authority records during that time period, but it also included work prior to those dates. The Entrance exam was useful in that it showed how they view the records. There may be process changes. The Flood Authority needs to be clear in the meeting notes about what the board is doing. In January there will be an exit audit and the members will be notified and anyone can attend.

Ms. Napier stated the auditor is looking for consistencies: is the program administered the same way every time? As to the budget, perhaps the Flood Authority should ask for money from RCO to fund the audit.

Mr. Kramer asked the Board if the contract between Lewis County and RCO should be amended for the **damaged west fork** Satsop gage (~~for WEST~~ and French and Associates) and to cover the cost of the audit. There was consensus.

14. Financial Reports

Ms. Napier highlighted the Financial Reports, one for the period ending September 30 and one report ending October 31. She stated the Authority should expect some changes. The auditor asked how bills are paid. He asked that the bills go to the Authority prior to payment, or the bills could be paid and brought to the Authority post payment. The auditor is also asking the Authority to review the warrant numbers. Ms. Napier already does that but now she needs to bring them back. Mr. Averill asked if the Executive Board could do that. Ms. Napier stated she will discuss that with the Auditor. Mr. Kramer stated since the Flood Authority is not a legal body then those rules might not apply. Ms. Napier stated it might be advisable to have more eyes on it since people want transparency.

15. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

16. Reports

a. Chair's Report

Chair Raines reminded the group that nominations for Chair and Vice Chair needed to go to Mr. Kramer so elections can be held at the January meeting.

b. Member Reports

Centralia – Mr. Averill stated there was some flooding in Centralia at China Creek and Salzer Creek; no major damage to the city. The city is looking forward to getting the China Creek project started.

Lewis County – Commissioner Fund stated the Commissioners are concerned about Hwy 12 because of the commerce on that road. It will take approximately 1,500 dump truck loads of material to clear the slide areas. Regarding the EOC – Lewis County had road closures and information got out very well.

Oakville – Mr. Thompson stated he evaluated the city after the 2007 flood and the overflow bridge at that time. The current event was large enough that some big stumps got carried away. The bridge functioned perfectly. One area in town he determined the water was coming in because of projects. He is going to propose an engineering project for that area now that he knows where the water is coming from. He thought the Early Warning System was very helpful.

Bucoda – Mr. Vanell stated he appreciates the maps showing Scatter Creek in the Tenino area. He asked if the Flood Authority has reached out to Tenino, even if it is to get information. If we are looking at tributaries to the Chehalis River then we need to look at Scatter Creek.

Mr. Louthain stated FEMA is reevaluating the Chehalis Basin and they are including Scatter Creek. It will not happen soon but it is in the scope.

Chehalis – Ms. Balmelli-Powe asked if the telephone meetings could be changed to an earlier time – perhaps 9:00 a.m. There were thumbs up for that proposal.

Cosmopolis – Mr. Chestnut proposed a joint project with Aberdeen. There high tides during the last event and the proposal to handle the Wishkah River would have mitigated that. Cosmopolis had high tide that was close to flooding but they did not get the rain.

Montesano – Mr. Estes stated the rivers can't be kept within their banks and the Wynoochee is no different. He would like to get that project in. He thanked everyone for the certificate.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated Mr. Estes served his community to the best of his ability and his leadership was very helpful to the Flood Authority.

c. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

d. State Team Report

There was no state team report.

17. Confirm Next Regular Meeting

The next meeting will be a telephone meeting at **9:00 a.m.** on January 21. The February meeting will be in Grays Harbor County.

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.